

Bat Conservation Trust



BCT Quarterly Report January – March 2011

The Bat Conservation Trust has a clear vision – **A world where bats and people thrive together in harmony.** Our mission is to **secure the future of bats in a changing world.** This report summarises progress for the quarter against BCT's four key objectives:

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Projects/Areas of activity</i>	<i>Page</i>
DISCOVER		
1. To establish the capacity of the landscape to support viable populations of bats		
Surveys, monitoring and research	NBMP	
	Bechstein's Survey	
	iBats	
	PEMBUS	
	Welsh Agri-Environment Scheme	
	Roofing membranes	
	Research collaborations	
ACT		
2. To secure and enhance bat populations to the full capacity of the landscape		
Biodiversity/Conservation	Biodiversity	
	Investigations	
	Bats and the Built Environment	
	International	
INSPIRE		
3. To win the level of support required to achieve and maintain these bat populations		
Bat Group Partnerships and BCT's work across the UK	Bat Group Partnerships	
	BCT in Wales	
	BCT in Scotland	
Education & Engagement	Hon. Education Officer	
	National Conference	
	Training	
	Helpline and Casework	
	Count Bat	
Marketing	Membership	
	Communications and Marketing	
	Fundraising	
CAPACITY		
4. BCT Management, Strategy and Administration		
Support Services	Finance, HR & Office Services	
Strategy	Strategy & Critical Strategic Areas	
Appendices	Organisational Structure	
	Staff list	
	Glossary	

Surveys, monitoring and research

NBMP

Survey Organisation

The table below shows the number of volunteers signed up for each survey in 2011, compared with the numbers for 2010. Five surveys are showing an increase in volunteer interest so far this year. These figures are expected to increase further as we get nearer the summer survey season.

New volunteers are no longer recruited to the National Bat Colony Survey (shown in italics in the table below, formerly run by the Robert Stebbings Consultancy), as this would detract from recruitment into the Colony Counts which provide similar but more detailed data. NBCS and Colony Count data are now fully integrated on the NBMP database and are analysed together.

Survey	No. of survey packs (to be) sent to volunteers	
	2011	2010
Pipistrelle colony count	693	855
Brown long-eared colony count	142	138
Serotine colony count	77	67
Natterer's colony count	75	76
Lesser horseshoe colony count	82	88
Field Survey	552	557
<i>National Bat Colony Survey</i>	63	69
Waterway Survey	610	702
Sunset/Sunrise Survey	652	583
Woodland Survey	111	88
Nathusius' Pipistrelle Survey	136	92

Hibernation Survey

To date 53 surveyors have returned data for 167 sites, out of 117 volunteers who were sent survey packs this winter. Thanks and reminders will be sent out shortly, with links to online maps summarising the results received so far. Volunteers have also been asked to report any observations with regard to white-nose syndrome (WNS). Laura Dunne and Helen Miller act as the contacts at BCT in relation to WNS.

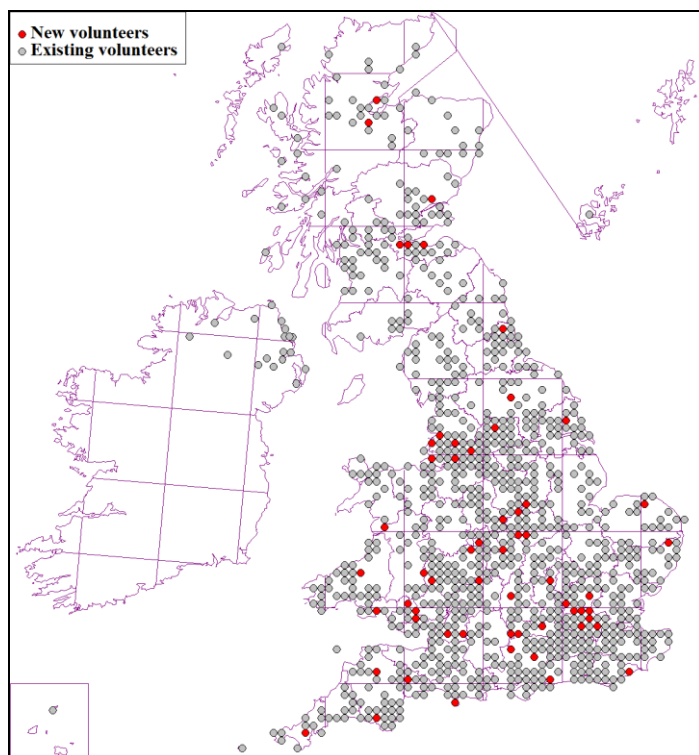
Woodland Survey

This survey is funded by Natural England with the aim of monitoring barbastelle activity at sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for this species. In 2010, NE funded additional work which involved recruiting volunteers to design and survey extra transects at SACs to increase coverage of these sites, to provide additional equipment to volunteers to help them monitor the sites, and to provide sound analysis training to volunteers who take part in the surveys at SAC sites to allow them to carry out sound analysis of the recordings collected on their surveys. A one-day workshop was developed which included a basic introduction to sound analysis of frequency division recordings followed by a more detailed session on analysis of barbastelle calls and recordings from the Woodland Survey. The workshop included presentations and practical sessions allowing participants to gain experience in analysing recordings before going away to work on their own analysis.

Two workshops were run in this period, one in January 2011 in Bristol; the second in February in London. In total 13 participants attended the workshops, 3 in Bristol and 10 in London.

Volunteer recruitment and support

65 new volunteers were recruited between January and March 2011. This brings the total number of active NBMP volunteers to 2012. The map below shows the distribution of current NBMP volunteers including new volunteers signing up in this period. Each 10km spot may represent more than one volunteer.



Distribution of existing NBMP volunteers and new volunteers signing up between January and March 2011

A breakdown of recruitment sources is shown below. The majority of new volunteers were recruited online, either giving 'internet' as their recruitment source, or more specifically, BCT's website. New volunteers recruited via other sources also signed-up by completing the online sign-up form, for example after being provided information on the NBMP from their local bat group, other NBMP volunteers or after attending public events.

Recruitment source	No. of new volunteers
Internet	20
Local Bat Group	13
BCT Website	8
Other NBMP volunteer (WOM)	5
Public event	3
Research project/University	3
Bat Walk	2
Bat detector workshop	1
Bat News	1
BCT Helpline	1
BCT Member	1
Count Bat	1

Data in	1
Help Us Count Bats leaflet (H1)	1
Misc article	1
New Roost Owner	1
Scottish Bat Officer	1
Unknown	1

NBMP training workshops/talks

KB re-drafted the NBMP Training Strategy for the period 2011-2014 to in February 2011. The Strategy summarises current NBMP training resources and our targets for 2011 and beyond. In 2011 we are aiming to deliver 30 NBMP workshops. Planning for workshop delivery has started and contact has been made with all Regional Bat Detector Workshop Leaders.

The table shows workshops delivered between January and March 2011.

Date	Location	Workshop delivered	Trainer/speaker
22 nd Jan	Bristol	Woodland Survey Sound Analysis	Jules Agate / Felicity Bates
19 th Feb	London	Woodland Survey Sound Analysis	Jules Agate / Philip Briggs
26 th March	Northern conference, Preston	Using Your Ears	Clare Rawcliffe
26 th March	Northern conference, Preston	Introduction to Sound Analysis	Kate Barlow

Meetings and events

KB and KH attended two workshop days at the BTO on 26th and 27th January. These were entitled: 'Improving the geographical, habitat and species coverage of the Breeding Bird Survey' and 'Increasing geographical coverage and coverage of other taxa'. These were very useful both for developing contacts and getting a better understanding of bird monitoring programmes in the UK.

KH and KB attended Steering Group meetings with JNCC on 16th February and 28th March 2011. The main topics discussed at these meetings were the ongoing development of the specification for the new NBMP database, development of online reporting for NBMP and the workplan for the coming year. The NBMP report for 2010 will be fully online with a separate page showing the trend results and background information for each species. KB has drafted an example species page which is being sent to NBMP stakeholders for comments before the layout is finalised and pages are completed for all species. The report will be published in May to coincide with the release of the UK Indicator and the International Day of Biodiversity.

In February 2011 KB contributed data on the NBMP to a survey by SNH to review recording scheme surveillance information for species in Scotland as part of their preparation of a Biodiversity Surveillance Strategy for Scotland.

An NBMP team meeting was held on 14th March at the BCT offices. KH, KB, PB, FB, HM and RA attended.

KB attended the North of England bat conference in Preston on 26th March.

KH attended the Living with Environmental Change workshop, London, 28 Jan 11

Living with Environmental Change is a consortium of government and funders interested in environmental monitoring. The meeting overview was ostensibly to examine where environmental data would come from if for example, there is no further investment in existing mechanisms like Countryside Survey in the short-term future. There was good attendance by NGOs and active discussion about the role of the volunteer sector and monitoring coordinated by NGOs.

KH attended the Biodiversity Indicators Forum, Defra London, 8 March 2011

On behalf of LINK KH attended this one day workshop run by Defra, which is part of a review of the current suite of UK indicators in the light of emerging targets from the CBD in Nagoya, and the European Biodiversity Strategy (to be published in summer 2011).

KH took part in a break out group discussing the volunteering indicator (which BCT is a contributor and various other LINK organisations contribute to) and was also able to have discussions with Anne Teller of DG Environment and Kataryna Biala of EEA. KH will follow up with both in relation to pan European monitoring and barriers to small NGOs to gain access to European funds.

NBMP database

The development of the functional specification for the new database is now underway. Andy Brewer from JNCC visited the BCT offices in January 2011 to go through all aspects and functionality of the existing database with PB. AB has been investigating options for implementation of a new database with a view to identifying first any difficulties and secondly the best solution for the re-development. AB has also been considering the best options for managing surveys and volunteers and the feasibility of integrating this part of the database with the wider BCT contact management database and the best option for online recording and the database type to use, including whether Indicia is the best solution for NBMP data in relation to storage of data and confidentiality, and also in terms of any additional developmental requirements to allow data from all NBMP surveys to be recorded onto it.

The key aspects of the database are as follows:

- Retain the functionality of the existing database in relation to survey and volunteer management
- Smooth transition of data from existing Access97 database to new system
- Allow online recording by volunteers using a single login from BCT website
- Integration of volunteer information with existing BCT membership management database
- Database must have sufficient level of confidentiality to protect roost locations and address details where necessary

The main challenges in the development of the database are as follows:

- Transition from the current Access97 database to a new system without losing the functionality of the existing system or incurring additional work during the transition period
- Integrating volunteer management into the BCT membership management system
- Fully integrating online recording pages into the BCT website and having a single login for users
- Determining the optimum solution for hosting the NBMP database

Work has been focusing on potential solutions for the integration of the different aspects of the requirements. AB and KB are working on a functional specification for the NBMP database (focusing on online recording pages for Colony Counts) for the end of March 2011, with input from all the NBMP team. AB has been in contact with Blue Bag Ltd to investigate unlocking and transition of current NBMP database. AB is also on contact with HWC for ongoing discussions on integrating with the BCT membership management database. The functional specification will provide a starting point for talking to potential contractors in the new financial year for development and implementation of the new system.

Indicators

UK and England Biodiversity Indicators.

BCT was commissioned to develop a bat indicator for the England Biodiversity indicators suite. The new indicator will form part of the revised streamlined set of indicators, and will use the same methodology as the UK indicator on populations of widespread bats.

Data and text for both the UK and England indicators for 2010 were sent to Defra in this period.

Research collaborations and publications

Katherine Boughey, UEA

Katherine has been analysing associations between bat records from the colony count and field surveys and a complex set of landscape variables using tools such as GIS. She has two papers accepted for publication in Biological Conservation.

Orly Razgour, Bristol University

Orly is studying the autoecology of the grey long-eared bat. She has submitted a paper to Biological Conservation on 'Using multi-scale modelling to predict habitat suitability for species of conservation concern: the grey long-eared bat as a case study'.

Bats and Churches

The SITA Trust application we developed in collaboration with Gareth Jones at Bristol University to work on soprano pipistrelle in churches in the East of England (submitted last quarter) was approved in late February. The grant will enable a postgraduate student to register for a PhD and undertake a 3 year project focusing on roosting ecology, use of surrounding landscape, microclimate of roosts in churches and trials of artificial roost provision. It is planned to start the studentship as early as possible in spring 2011. The SITA Trust funding is dependent on a third party contribution of 11.5% being made, and this has been donated by Natural England. There have been delays relating to the processing of the Natural England contribution, but as soon as SITA Trust receives the payment the agreement will come into force. In anticipation of the possible funding, the recruitment of PhD students was begun in February and interviews are scheduled for 31 March. We aim to start the studentship on 1 May, undertaking a reduced field season in spring 2011 and two further full field seasons. As part of this project we will be establishing an advisory group of stakeholders integrating expertise from the church, the heritage sectors, recent and ongoing related projects and bat workers who have specialist expertise in bats and churches.

Bechstein's Bat Survey Project

All data from the third year of the project has now been collated and an interim report produced for funders. In the third year of the project seven bat groups took part; Buckinghamshire, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Kent, Somerset and Worcestershire.

Results for 2010

- Selected woodlands in 91 10km squares were surveyed across seven counties
- 11 bat species were recorded: Barbastelle, Bechstein's bat, brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle, Daubenton's bat, lesser horseshoe bat, Natterer's bat, noctule, serotine, soprano pipistrelle, whiskered/Brandt's/alcahoe bat.
- In 2010 a total of 33 Bechstein's bats (22 females and 11 males) were caught at 19 sites
- In total for all years, 50 Bechstein's bats (26 females and 24 males) have now been caught at 32 sites across seven counties

2010 was a very successful year for the project, with more individuals caught and Bechstein's bats captured than other years of the project. Approximately 75 volunteers took part this summer, learning new skills and gaining experience in survey techniques and bat identification.

Bechstein's bats caught across Buckinghamshire, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Kent, Somerset and Worcestershire in 2010 add to records collected in Dorset, Kent and Surrey in 2008 and 2009. These records are providing a better understanding of Bechstein's bat distribution across Southern England.

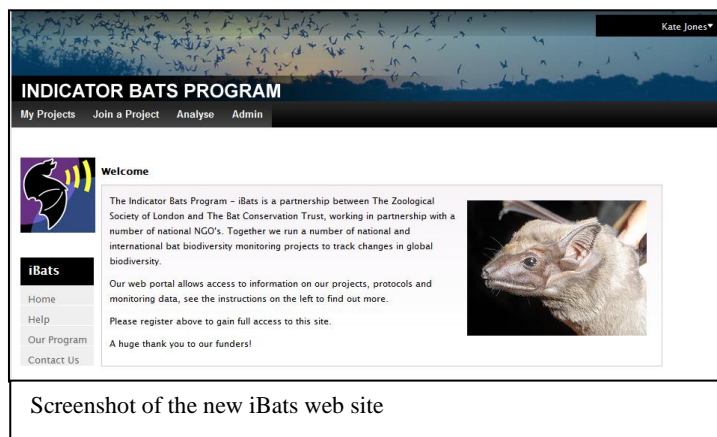
Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Worcestershire Bat Groups will complete their involvement in May and June 2011. Data from these surveys will be added to the data collected in 2009 and 2010. A final project report and distribution map will be produced in September 2011.

Indicator Bats Program (iBats)

BCT and ZSL have continued to assist host countries to apply for funding to continue and expand the project in 2011. An application to the Rufford Foundation for Russia was successful but we were not able to obtain funding from the Lush Charity Pot for Ukraine. We are currently waiting to hear whether our applications for a Whitley Award, BCI Grassroots Award and a Conservation Leadership Program Grant and a St Andrews Prize for the Environment have been successful. Unfortunately we have been unable to obtain sufficient funding to continue the iBats project in the UK in 2011 and as a consequence we will be unable to offer support for the project this year. However, we are currently looking for other funding sources to support the project in 2012.

Testing of the iBats application for the iPhone and smartphones utilising the Android operating system is now complete and these will be available as soon as the new website has been completed (see below). The application allows a smartphone to be directly attached to the ultrasonic detector and the geo-referenced sound files can then be automatically uploaded onto the web portal, thus replacing the recording device, GPS unit and the recording sheets.

We have continued to test the working version of the new iBats web portal. The website not only improves the data management aspect of the project but also allows volunteers will be able to explore their data more easily – e.g. generate maps of data, download survey routes and geo-referenced bat call data, and produce reports. The new web portal will incorporate transect data gathered using the application for the iPhone and phones running the Android operating system.



Screenshot of the new iBats web site

JR completed the huge task of cleaning the iBats database prior to the launch of the new site. This has involved identifying those events that require updating, deleting or amending as well as ensuring that the gpx files are correct and in an appropriate format.

JR has additionally been working on survey protocols for the new smartphones applications as well as a website containing resources for iBats users.

PEMBUS – Pan European Monitoring of Underground Sites

This project is currently on hold (decision summer 2010) until the funding climate is more favourable to a Life+ or other European funding bid.

Welsh Agri-Environment Scheme

The main focus of work this quarter has been sonogram analysis of frequency division (from Field and Waterways Surveys) and Anabat (from Horseshoe Bat Surveys) recordings of echolocation calls from the 2010 field season. Other work included entry of habitat survey and sonogram analysis data, preliminary analyses of field data, annual reporting to Welsh Assembly and recruitment of the 2011 Field Team.

Target species were detected at most farms. On Field Surveys, common and soprano pipistrelles were detected at all farms, and noctule was detected at 65% of Tir Gofal and 60% of control farms. On Waterway Surveys, Daubenton's bat was detected at all farms. On the surveys using Anabats, lesser horseshoe bat was detected at 74% of Tir Gofal and 85% of control farms, and greater horseshoe bat at 56% of Tir Gofal and 52% of control farms.

Preliminary analyses have been conducted and reported to WAG via the consortium's annual report. No conclusions have been drawn at this stage due to the incomplete nature of the dataset (i.e. Years 1 and 2 only).

A field team comprising five Seasonal Field Assistants has been recruited for the 2011 field season, and the team will commence their posts mid-May. Three MSc students will also be joining the project this year and they will be undertaking their dissertation projects based on project work.

Roofing membranes

Over the past few months the bats and breathable roofing membrane project has made some good progress. I have given three talks to bat groups in the South of the country, where the project was very well received and a good number of contacts were made. Further to these talks I have had two more invitations to talk next winter.

The research into mechanical stability of membranes had come to a halt due to lack of knowledge on membrane manufacture. This was resolved by a trip to the DuPont factory in Luxemburg in early March. Since this visit three more companies have shown an interest in aiding the research, to ensure both bats and their products are safe. I am visiting one of these companies on 1st April in order to look over some ideas they have had concerning making membranes bat friendly. A second company has sent me a lot of data on humidity and temperature in roof spaces with breather membranes fitted.

The bat claw data is now complete and all measurements are being analysed in AutoCAD. This has taken longer than anticipated but we should have a large amount of information regarding size, shape and curvature of bat claws once finished. It is hoped this will allow us to produce a good mimetic claw with which to carry out mechanical testing.

Alice Lightowlers, who was supported by a Nuffield Bursary to undertake six weeks research on the frictional interactions of bats with breathable roofing membranes, was put forward for the Young Scientist of the Year Award, and won a runner up prize at the Big Bang event in London on March 10th. Alice's work will hopefully be published later this year.

The project literature is also now moving along, as I have more information on the process used for manufacturing and finishing the membranes. Along with the literature review, I also have two modules that I am currently taking and completing coursework for, which will be finished mid April.

Finally, the roofing projects that had data loggers placed in them will be due to finish shortly and so these data loggers can then be removed and the temperature and humidity recording analysed.

Biodiversity/Conservation

Woodland Project

LH and HMc finalised the objectives for the Woodland project to secure the funding of a post for the next two years. The aim of the project is to secure the future of bats and the woodlands on which they rely.

This will be achieved by meeting the following objectives:

1. To work with woodland managers and owners to give them targeted advice, information and resources on woodland management for bats.
2. To build conservation capacity around key habitats within local bat groups by training and recruiting volunteers, including local bat groups in the south and east of England.
3. To set up and manage or catalyse a programme of short and long term woodland projects, to gather evidence to better understand the use of woodlands by UK bat species for example by radio tracking bats in hotspots.
4. To establish woodland sites showcasing appropriate woodland management for bats.
5. To promote schemes available to achieve greater habitat connectivity, and influence habitat management for bats.

Recruitment for the woodland officer position has started and interviews are scheduled for the 18th May 2011.

Bats and Trees - Arboricultural Association Guidance

LH contributed to the Arboricultural Association Guidance document on Bats and Trees. The document advocates the training of tree surgeons and woodland managers via the BCT training courses and provides better guidance on how to ensure proper documentation and care is taken throughout the assessment process.

South West Woodland Initiative

LH attended a meeting between NE, RSPB, Plantlife and BC to develop the South West Woodland Initiative. The initiative aims to develop guidance and targeting methods to direct woodland management grants in the right area. The challenge is to balance the needs of a range of species without compromising habitat for others. The first draft of the document will go out for consultation to a range of stakeholders at the end of the month.

Good Practice Guidelines – Surveying for Onshore Windfarms Consultation

The stand alone chapter of the BCT guidelines has been sent out to consultation amongst BCT members and groups, members of the industry and academics specialising in the field. The chapter is due for publication in April. A summary of the responses can be requested from LH.

Landscape for Lessers - GIS Workshop

LH organised and attended a workshop in Abegavenney on the 16th March 2011. JH chaired the meeting and KH, RA and SL all attended. Project. The workshop was funded by CCW in order to take forward aspects of the Landscape for Lessers and identify ways to develop a GIS model CCW commissioned the Brecon Beacons Local Records Centre (LRC) to produce on Lesser Horseshoes across Wales.

The aim of the meeting was to consult with stakeholders across Wales to develop a layer that will most benefit practitioners on the ground. A number of presentations were given from other areas/SNCOs on work that has been developed, lessons learnt, how they have been used. This guided discussions to identify how these methods can be developed to ease integration across the UK in the future and how to verify and validate records.

Review of external Advice - Helpline

LH, KG, CS and XS reviewed current helpline documentation sent externally to ensure that advice being given is up to date and robust. LH developed additional material and delivered training for the helpline staff in preparation for the coming changes in the planning system. The documents provide an outline of the licensing system and survey effort and will be used to send to members and callers who have questions concerning these areas. The aim is alleviate administrative pressure on both the helpline and biodiversity teams.

Natural England Standing Advice

JH attended a meeting on the proposed changes to the approach that Natural England will take in relation to advice to local Planning Authorities. The cuts in funding have Natural England will be taking a step back from the advice that it provides Local Planning Authorities on protected species.

As of April, NE will no longer provide advice on planning applications that:

1. Are submitted without the relevant protected species surveys. (Where such consultations include other issues such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, or protected landscapes, for example, our comments will relate to these matters only).
2. Include scoping surveys recommending further surveys where these have not been undertaken and submitted with the scoping reports.
3. May affect badgers, water vole, white-clawed crayfish, common lizard, grass snake, slow-worm, common frog, common toad, palmate newt and common newt, barn owls, other breeding birds not protected by Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Instead NE will refer Local Planning Authorities to their standing advice:

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east_of_england/ourwork/standingadvice/protectedspecies/default.aspx

This change has been anticipated and BCT has been developing additional helpline documents, bat group support, training courses aimed at planners and specialist online protocols. Concerns on the potential impact that this will have on the BCT helpline and the overall standard of work in this area have been raised directly with NE and as part of a Link joint response.

Consultation - A review of bat mitigation in relation to highways

It is likely to provide an important source of reference for future bat mitigation, in the way that Catherine Bickmore Associates (2003) has been used, and also supports the draft Highways Agency DMRB Advice Note on Bats.

The report provides an evidence-based review of severance by roads and the effects on bats, based upon a review of scientific literature and monitoring undertaken of habitats mitigation measures implemented in the UK. It summarises the latest findings from the literature, analyses the case study monitoring report results, discusses the difficulties in assigning 'success' to a case study and makes recommendations based upon the latest knowledge of bat ecology to inform decision making when selecting mitigation measures for severance. The report also makes recommendations for improving the quality of data gathered by pre- and post-construction monitoring to increase our understanding of the success of such measures.

Meetings and Conferences

- Norfolk Bat Workers day
- Wildlife and Countryside Link – Biodiversity Working Group
- England Woodland Biodiversity Group
- Natural Environment White Paper Workshop
- Natural England BAP Audit meeting

Investigations

Operations

As in previous years the first quarter has produced few reports of bat crime although there are initial indications of a very interesting investigation relating to illegal trade in endangered species that has come to light as a consequence of internet auction sites being monitored by BCT for trade in bats. The total number of incidents reported to us so far is similar to the same period in 2010.

Training

Bat Crime 2010 is now in an advanced state of preparation and it is anticipated that it will be available on our website by the end of March. The report demonstrates an increase of 40% in the number of incidents that have been referred to the Police, in many cases preventative action has resulted in good conservation benefit. It is however of some concern that there have been no prosecutions for bat crime for 2 years, the reasons for this require further research.

In February BCT attended the first wildlife and heritage crime seminar organised by the Crown Prosecution Service. We provided a presentation that outlined not only the main causes of bat crime but also the importance of effective investigation and prosecution. We were present at the Scottish wildlife crime conference and will be providing input later this month to the national Police wildlife crime enforcer's course and to an in-house training course being run by West Midlands Police.

Wildlife Crime Priorities

In February bat crime was formally accepted as a UK wildlife crime priority for 2011-2013 along with raptor persecution, illegal trade in endangered species, freshwater pearl mussels, badger persecution and some types of poaching. At that meeting NWCUC reported that they were having to prioritise their work and indicated that they considered bat persecution to be one of their own priorities. Whilst this reinforces the importance of dealing with bat crime in a professional manner it also presents challenges to BCT in particular with regard to the submission of intelligence to the unit. Julia Hanmer will continue in the role of plan owner for the bat priority.

Bats and the Built Environment

Mitigation website

The new website, called *Roost*, has been built. We are compiling content for the site and testing the case-study upload forms. Launch of the site should be within the next two months.

The website will allow consultants and roost owners to upload their own examples of bat roost mitigation. The aim will be for the website to become a reference site for mitigation best practice and research.

Consultations

Mayville Community Centre, Bere Architects

KG and LH have advised Bere Architects on the placement of bat and bird boxes on a passivhaus retrofit of a community centre in north London.

Talks, Events and Conferences

Women in Sustainable Construction, Reading University (January) – invited speaker

KG was invited by SusCon to present a talk at the Women in Sustainable Construction conference. The talk was very well-received with over 50 delegates and it was great for BCT to be represented amongst other high-profile speakers. An overview of the event can be found here:

http://www.suscon.uk.net/pdf/women_in_sc.pdf

Ecobuild – London (March) - stand and two talks

Ecobuild is the biggest event in the built environment calendar. Taking place over 3 days the sustainable design and construction conference and expo expected to receive over 50,000 visitors this year. KG worked closely with the organisers, Natural England and RESET to ensure a comprehensive range of biodiversity related seminars in the Cityscape arena and in the Biodiversity Pavilion. We helped put together a number of information boards on bats, bats and buildings and impacts of lighting. KG also presented a talk on Designing Buildings for Bats on two of the days, which were well attended.

BCT manned a stand in the Biodiversity Pavilion which was incredibly busy. We had over 120 people signing up for more information. Thanks to HMc, XS, AA, LH, ZT and ST for their help on the stand. A blog of the event can be viewed here: <http://batconservationtrust.blogspot.com/2011/03/builders-get-batty-kelly-gunnell.html>

Amanda says of her experience at Ecobuild: “This year I finally got to experience Ecobuild and found it to be really good fun and worthwhile. It was nice to spend some time with other BCT staff, to learn from them, get away from the helpline for a bit and really get stuck in to offer advice to builders, architects and ecologists and more... It was also good that we could share ideas with others and equally they could give us more insight into how things really work out there in practice. The leads that came in for examples and case studies for Kelly could be invaluable... It was really good also to unite with other wildlife trusts and charities to educate the public. I certainly learned so much more and would recommend other staff to get involved too next time as it would really benefit them.

I think for next year the surgery workshops should be scheduled into the main event programme as this was a real missed opportunity. I loved the talks you did though Kelly at the Cityscape- should definitely do this next time too. “

BCT was also mentioned in the Architect’s Journal sustainability blog:

<http://blog.emap.com/footprint/2011/03/02/footprint-at-ecobuild/>

Training

Bat finding – Kent (March)

KG spent a day with Shirley Thompson in Kent looking at a number of different building roosts.

Development of new BCT building courses

BCT is advertising in the new training brochure two new building-related courses: *Bats for Building Contractors* and *Designing Buildings for Bats and Biodiversity: a course for architects*. KG is working with LH and HM to develop and review the content for these courses. We are hoping that the first round of courses can be offered from the middle of the year.

Communications

Financial Times: Live and Let Live: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/d49b5160-241e-11e0-a89a-00144feab49a.html#axzz1HuFRdOJ7>

KG assisted the author with many leads in the above article for which Carol Williams was also interviewed.

International

BatLife Europe – BCT is working with NGO partners across Europe to form BatLife Europe as an international NGO.

We have held 3 skype Trustee meetings developing the documents for charity registration and NGO partnership applications.

Bat Group Partnerships & BCT's work across the UK

BCT-Bat Group Relationships: UK overview

Bat Group Database

The bat group database went live this quarter, following an initial testing phase in early January.

Difficulties experienced

Unfortunately full data integration was not successful –the intention was for bat group contact data to be compared and, where appropriate, overwrite pre-existing member contact data to avoid duplication. However, this did not happen and the data set was simply added. This has meant working through all of the datasets on the live site manually which has proved timely. We also continue to identify design glitches that will need to be addressed before the database is fully function.

Benefits

Despite these initial set-up problems, the database is already proving to be an incredibly useful online tool: it ensures that UK bat group data is stored in a consistent and easily accessible way. Once the advanced search tool has been developed, it will also prove invaluable for reporting and for data analysis in regards to project development.

Bat Group Bulletins

Four bat group bulletins were circulated this quarter. These are circulated to nominated contacts of Partner and Network Groups, only.

Information included: details of the BCT Survey Guidelines: Onshore Wind Farms chapter consultation; a white-nose syndrome update; details of a high court judgement that helped to clarify the meaning of 'disturbance' under the Habitats Regulations; an update from Natural England re: sharing roost records; a notification that bookings for the National Bat Conference have opened; details of the European Bat Research Symposium in Lithuania; BCT vacancy information, including details of the Partnership Officer post.

White-Nose Syndrome

Helen Miller and Laura Dunne have continued to act as lead contacts for WNS related enquiries this quarter.

12 suspect fungal samples and specimens have been submitted to the VLA from Kent, Surrey, Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Herts & Middlesex, Devon, Somerset, Oxfordshire and Loch Lomond, in accordance with BCT's guidelines. Samples have been taken primarily from lesser horseshoe bats and natterer's bats, with a smaller number of pipistrelle and Daubenton's bat samples. All samples were from dead bats, with the exception of one live Daubenton's and one live natterer's bat in Kent.

None of the fungal samples submitted have been characteristic of *G. destructans* - the fungus associated with white-nose syndrome in the US.

BCT has maintained a log of all these cases on the BCT website (on a dedicated WNS – information for bat worker page, which we advise hibernation workers to check prior to visits). It has also followed up on all cases to thank bat workers and continue to encourage and promote the decontamination procedures recommended in the WNS Guidelines.

Rabies

BCT has been liaising with the VLA this quarter about possible approaches to data sharing with bat groups. As a result, BCT have now been sent a spreadsheet of past VLA records (from the passive

surveillance programme) that we have permission to share with bat groups at a 10km resolution. The VLA has also agreed to include a tick box on new passive surveillance submission forms that will allow permission for records to be shared at a higher resolution with bat groups in future. The first circulation of records will be next quarter.

BCT–Bat Group meetings (*meetings in Wales and Scotland dealt with separately below*)

English Regional Conferences

The North of England Bat Conference took place on 26th March at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston. Attended by 150 delegates. Feedback forms are being analysed at the time of reporting.

The South West Bat Conference has been organised for 2nd April at the University of Plymouth. The conference is fully booked (150 delegates due to attend), with a waiting list of over 20.

Partner Group Meetings

The Bat Group Officer attended meetings with the following Partner Groups this quarter:

- Hampshire Bat Group, 12th January
- Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Group, 13th January
- Dorset Bat Group, 3rd February
- South Lancashire Bat Group, 8th February
- Birmingham & Black Country Bat Group, 24th February
- Westmorland & Furness Bat Group, 8th March

Information generated from these meetings about bat group needs, primary interests, volunteer numbers and contact data has been stored in the new Bat Group Database to assist future reporting, project development and analysis.

Recruitment

Recruitment for the Partnerships Officer (a role title that will supersede the Bat Group Officer role title) commenced in February. The position was advertised as maternity cover with likelihood of extension. The revised job description for this role has a new emphasis on working with Partner Groups to develop and implement projects that help BCT to meet national biodiversity targets (in line with BCT's strategic objectives). There is also an increased emphasis on enhancing BCT's capacity to delivery volunteer training. Management of Bat Group relations, communication between bat groups and BCT, and delivery of regional conferences continue to be a high priority for this role.

BCT in Wales

Engaging with wider environmental and political network

The principal focus of work this last quarter, and one that has taken up a great deal of time has been the Review of the All-Wales Element of the new Glastir Agri-environment Scheme. This review was initiated by Elin Jones AM, Minister for Rural Affairs following a poor uptake by the farming community of Glastir. The RSPB represented the WEL on the Review panel, following complaints to the Minister that WEL had not been included in the Review process and that the panel had no environmental representation. The RSPB were the only ecologist on the Review panel with everyone else representing the farming community. The tight deadline of the Review and the regularity with which the panel met resulted in quick turn arounds of WEL internal reports and comments on progress and recommendations being put forward by the Panel. Despite being able to support many of the recommendations being proposed by the Review panel, WEL was unable to agree to some of the recommendations being made to the Minister. In addition, the Panel would not formally acknowledge the concerns of WEL and WEL effectively had to withdraw from the process. A subsequent meeting was held with the Minister to discuss our concerns. The Review panel has now reported to the Minister and we understand that the Minister has accepted some of the

recommendations and has asked officials to look into the more contentious areas that were raised by WEL. We can therefore expect more work in the coming months after the elections in Wales in May.

The Species Expert Group and the Wales Mammal Biodiversity Action Plan Forum met in February.

Consultations

There have no consultations during this quarter.

Wales Environment Link (WEL)

We continue to receive regular electronic communications from WEL and its groups. WEL's Biodiversity Working Group and Biodiversity Campaign Task & Finish Group continue to exchange emails on a regular basis.

Maintaining and enhancing the existing volunteer support

Formal meetings with bat groups continue as time and other commitments permit. Regular contact is maintained through electronic bulletins and other ad hoc emails whenever the opportunity arises.

Partnership Agreements

In Wales there are 15 bat groups and two mammal groups.

Bat Group	Relationship	Ends	
Cardiff	Partner	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Clwyd	Partner	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Dyfed	Partner	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Glamorgan	Network	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Gwynedd	Partner	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Monmouthshire	Network	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Montgomery	Network	31/03/2011	Confirmed
North Ceredigion	Partner	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Pembrokeshire	Network	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Snowdonia National Park	Partner	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Teifi	Network	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Vale of Glamorgan & Bridgend	Network	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Valleys	Partner	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Gwent	Network	31/03/2011	Confirmed
Brecknock	Network	31/3/2011	Confirmed
Radnorshire	Network	31/3/2011	Confirmed
Carmarthenshire	Inactive		Pilot project

New agreement papers have been issued with requests for meetings with Partner groups and three meetings have taken place. Carmarthenshire Bat Group are likely to have no relationship with BCT as it appears to be inactive otherwise all bat groups are renewing their arrangements with BCT.

Outreach

We are organising a new Urban Bat survey project with Carmarthenshire LBAP Officer. So far 24 volunteers have come forward expressing an interest in taking part. In addition, I have also been in discussion with Cardiff University to extend the (Cardiff) Urban Bat survey project with students to look specifically at bat activity in the major Cardiff parks. We have 15 students interested in taking part this year.

City and County of Swansea, under the Community and Nature fund (EU grant funding for post Objective 1 funding) have asked me to assist in delivering a number of engagement walks in selected areas of Swansea.

Volunteer support and training

Wales Bat Conference

We are organising a Wales Bat Conference for 1-3 July in association with Dyfed Bat Group. The weekend will take place at Trinity College, Carmarthen. The WBC will replace the annual Wales Bat Workers Day for this year and instead we will look to organise a Wales Bat Carers Workshop.

Advanced bat detector skills

We organised two Anabat training courses for volunteers at level I/II and level III. Although a few people could not attend the courses, initial interest was high and there is scope to organise more courses later in the year.

Basic Bat Care

We have now the remaining two basic bat care courses for Wales. The second course was held again in Carmarthen and the third course was held in north Wales. 17 new Help Line carers were recruited between the two courses and this makes a total of 33 carers recruited across all three courses.

Other activities

SL is continuing to work closely with the Deputy CEO on funding applications and is also part of the team looking at effective project planning within BCT.

BCT in Scotland

Building volunteer network

The Scottish officer met up with three bat groups (North East Scotland, Inverness and Central Scotland bat group) and with representatives from the North Highland bat network this quarter. All partner groups are regularly contacted with email bulletins.

Training

5 x Training talks were delivered to council staff re Bats and development; these were in Golspie, Inverness, Fort William, Angus and Dundee. These are usually delivered as a lunch time talk aimed at making it easy for staff (planners, roads engineers, building control, tree wardens, landscape architects) etc. to attend.

New Volunteer Recruitment

A last minute offer of grant from SNH has resulted in the purchase of lots more field equipment (mainly bat detectors and recording devices) which will be used to encourage further NBMP surveys.

Public Education/Enabling involvement of the public

- Approx 1000 leaflets sent out/ taken to events/bat group meetings
- BCT Displays/resources used at 3 events.
- Batty book review project with St Mary's school (ongoing)
- Media – article and photographs for Orkney Field club journal written by Scottish officer for publication this spring.
- A TV interview with Scottish TV re biodiversity and new build was given.
- Scottish officer attended working with a difference meeting (encouraging contact with Black and ethnic minority groups).
- 4 new displays have been bought with SNH grant which can be loaned out to Rangers and bat groups at events.

Identify and Co-ordinate Priority projects in conjunction with bat groups.

- A new bat group has formed in Tayside by the merging of Dundee, Perth and Angus groups.

Legal

- Legal training was organized by the Scottish Officer for consultants/SNH staff in January 2011. (35 attendees over 2 training days).
- The Scottish Officer attended the Police Wildlife Crime Conference.
- The Scottish officer worked with Wildlife Crime Prevention officers to develop a bat themed project for the John Muir Trust Award.

Personal Training/office matters

The Scottish officer attended a bat detector seminar, a half day of legal training and the BCT educator's day. In addition a steering group meeting on 10th March to review the years work and a staff appraisal.

Education & Engagement

Hon. Education Officer

Publications

Edited *Young Batworker* 80.

On Editorial Committee for *Bat News*

Courses/Presentations

19/2/11 presentation (on behalf of BCT) on *Managing churches and churchyards for bats* at the fourth *Kent God's Acre Project* workshop

Feb-March. Worked with HM updating *Training for trainers* course.

18-22/3/11 Co-tutored *Training for trainers* course

Meetings

26/1/11 At BCT office. Editorial meeting

Count Bat meeting

1/2/11. At BCT office HM planning update of *Training for Trainers Course*

2/1/11 meeting and roost visit with James Hales to provide material for his PhD on the effect of bats droppings in churches

17/2/11. At BCT office HM. As 1/2/11

18/2/11. Attended meeting of Kent BAP steering group

4/3/11. Count Bat Educational meeting at BCT office.

14/3/11 With XH visited Pepenbury, a care home for adults with learning disabilities, to plan involvement with Count Bat.

15/3/11 Conference call meeting with HM and Katherine Walsh (NE) re T4T

17/3/11 Meeting with Education Officer at *Howlette Wildlife Park*, Kent, planning survey to provide information for new educational materials about Bats.

Other

3/3/11. On BCT stand at *Ecobuild*

8/3/11. Lecture to MSc students of Environmental Conservation at Greenwich University

22/3/11. Took KG on a tour of a range of bat roosts in East Kent

National Conference

With help from Gail Armstrong the programme has been confirmed and the online booking system is open for the National Bat Conference 2011. The Early Bat booking discounts apply until 20th April, once this discount finishes we will allow the £5 discount for members only.

MB has contacted all our corporate members to let them know about our sponsorship opportunities. We have two potential major sponsors, Titley Scientific who sponsored us last year through Richard Crompton, this is yet to be confirmed and Wildlife Acoustics, we are finalizing the contract for this sponsorship.

Training

Professional training

Bats and Bat Surveys

The 2011 dates and venues are as follows, with bookings to date:

18-20 April	Juniper Hall FSC Centre (Surrey)	15 booked
1-3 June	Nettlecombe FSC Centre (Somerset)	5 booked
25-27 July	Orielton FSC Centre (Pembrokeshire)	2 booked
12-15 August	Malham Tarn FSC Centre (Yorkshire)	2 booked

Planning and Preparation of Surveys

Dates and venues for 2011 are as follows, with bookings to date:

11 May	Juniper Hall FSC Centre (Surrey)	5 booked
24 August	Lackham Countryside Centre (Wiltshire)	1 booked

Surveying Buildings (including Bat Identification)

Dates and venues for 2011 are as follows, with bookings to date:

12-13 May	Juniper Hall FSC Centre (Surrey)	10 booked
25-26 August	Lackham Countryside Centre (Wiltshire)	2 booked
17-18 October	Clumber Park (Nottinghamshire)	1 booked

Bat detector courses

Two new bat detector courses are being developed - Using Bat Detectors and Sound Analysis Intermediate course and Using Bat Detectors and Sound Analysis Advanced course. Dates for 2011 are as follows:

Intermediate

14-15 May	Juniper Hall FSC (Surrey)	
28-29 June	Preston Montford FSC (Shropshire)	
18-19 August	Nettlecombe FSC (Somerset)	

Advanced

1-2 June	Juniper Hall FSC (Surrey)	
3-4 August	Preston Montford FSC (Shropshire)	
1-2 September	Nettlecombe FSC (Somerset)	

Surveying Barns

Dates for 2011 are as follows, with bookings to date:

7 October	St Ippolyt's Hall (Herts)	1 booked
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Surveying Bridges

Dates for 2011 are as follows, with bookings to date:

31 October	Juniper Hall FSC Centre (Surrey)	1 booked
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Surveying Trees

One course ran this quarter. It took place at Hinchingsbrooke County Park (Cambs) on 14 March and was attended by 14 people, Sandie Sowler was the tutor.

Dates for the remainder of 2011 are as follows, with bookings to date:

7 November	Bewerley Park (North Yorkshire)	0 booked
5 December	Richmond Park (Surrey)	4 booked

Arboriculture and Bats

The two courses planned for this quarter were cancelled due to low numbers.

Dates and venues for 2011 are as follows:

7 March	Malham Tarn FSC Centre (N. Yorkshire) – cancelled	
28 March	Ickworth House (Suffolk) – cancelled	
7 April	Juniper Hall FSC Centre (Surrey)	9 booked
11 April	Plas Tan-y-Bwlch (Gwynedd)	4 booked
20 June	Nettlecombe FSC Centre (Somerset)	3 booked
4 July	Hinchingsbrooke Country Park (Cambs)	2 booked
1 August	Margam Park FSC Centre (Glamorgan)	3 booked
22 August	Richmond Park (Surrey)	0 booked
27 September	Bewerley Park (N. Yorkshire)	0 booked
10 October	Harcourt Arboretum (Oxfordshire)	0 booked

Fibrescope course for arborists

The dates for this course have not yet been set.

Bats and Bridges: an awareness course

Dates for 2011 are as follows, with bookings to date:

30 September	Juniper Hall FSC Centre (Surrey)	2 booked
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Building for Biodiversity

HM, LH and KG had initial discussions about the development of a new course for architects. We hope to develop and pilot this course by the end of 2011.

Volunteer training

Introduction to Bats and How to Lead a Bat Walk Courses

Dates for 2011 are as follows, with bookings to date:

How to Lead a Bat Walk	Dunblane, Perthshire	2 booked
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Bat Care

An additional two bat courses were run in Wales with the help of SL. These courses were tutored by Maggie Brown.

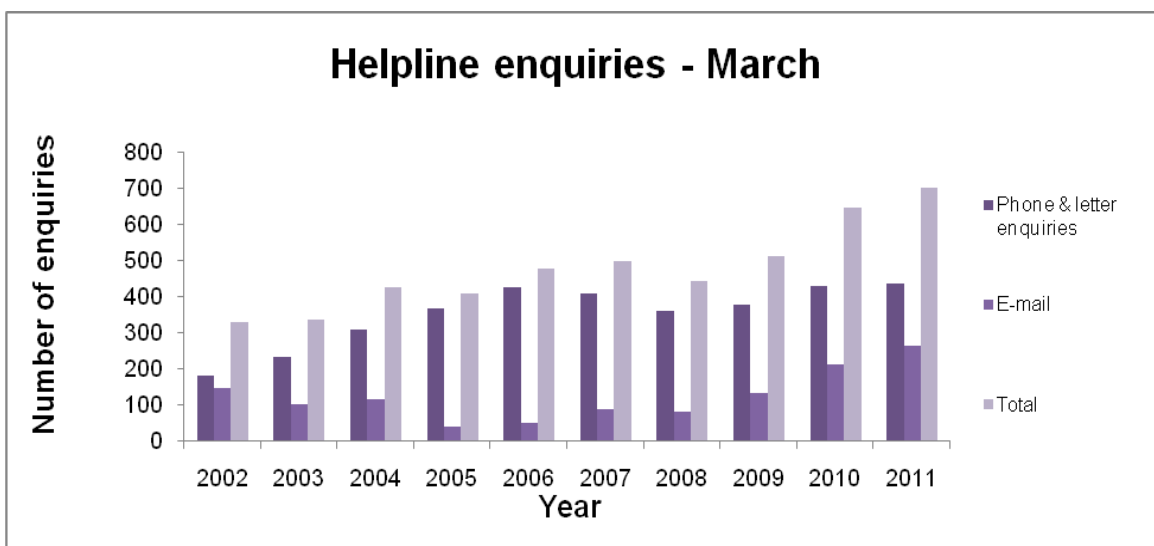
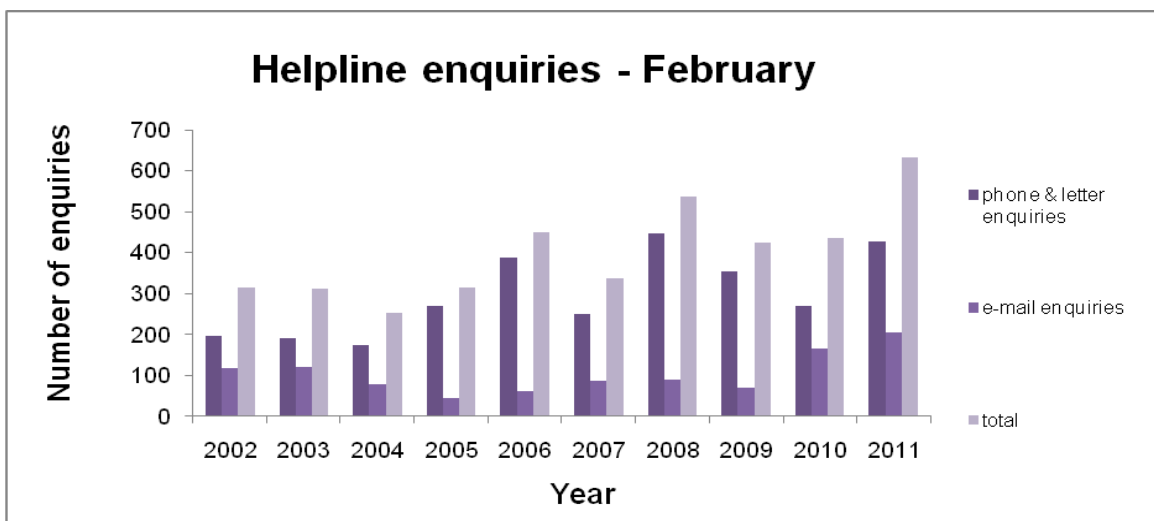
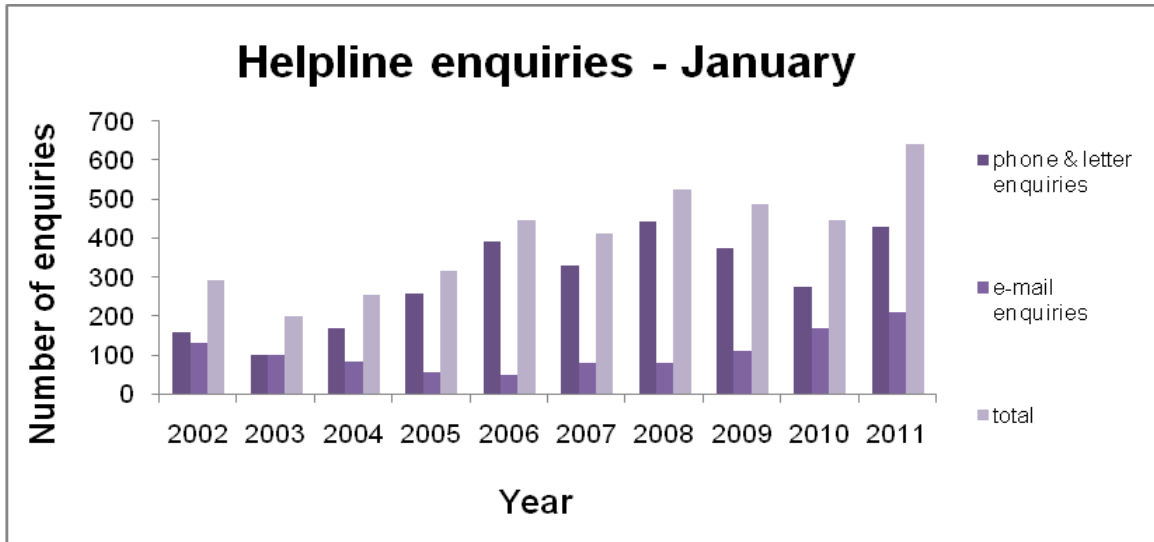
Other projects

Training standards

An overview of the project (for professional surveyors) was submitted to IEEM's professional affairs committee in February. The committee were impressed with what had been achieved so far and will be sent the final document for comment. HM (with KS and LH) also produced a short bat survey competencies document at the request of IEEM, to be included in their survey competencies guidance document. This information was based on the training standards project.

Helpline and Casework

Helpline Figures; Numbers of enquiries



The graphs illustrate the total number of phone call and e-mail enquiries taken in January, February and March from 2002 to 2011.

Overview

Enquiries usually come in less frequently in the winter period between January and March as bats are largely hibernating and therefore are less conspicuous. Helpline calls tend to remain fairly constant and low during January and February, with many calls relating to evidence of bats found during treatment for cluster fly, bats found during work, advice regarding proposed works and known roosts, including churches, and bat care calls largely involving malnourished bats which have come out of hibernation too early. The number of calls and emails received begins to increase during March, and many visits and letters become increasingly urgent due to the windows for works near maternity roosts ending in April.

The Helpline's contribution to bat conservation is ongoing rather than through individual projects. As a consequence, the Helpline's continued input and improvement in advancing the BCT's objectives is best measured by growth in the number of enquiries dealt with and the increase in efficiency in which these are handled. The total number of enquiries handled by the helpline in this quarter increased from 1529 in 2010 to 1979 in 2011.

The proportion of emails received was 33%, 32% and 38% for January, February and March 2011 respectively, compared to 38%, 38% and 33% for the same months in 2010. The proportion of emails received appears to be fairly constant between the past two years, after increasing in previous years.

All three months of this quarter had the highest total enquiry levels compared to the same months in previous years, indicating that helpline is reaching increasing numbers of people and therefore helping to further the BCT's goals in bat conservation by assisting and educating more people. The percentage increase was highest in January and February, typically the quietest months on helpline. Conversely, the number of roost visits organised for Natural England decreased in January and February this year, compared to 2010.

January

The total number of enquiries in January increased dramatically from 449 in January 2010 to 647, a rise of 44%. This rise was predominantly made up of telephone and letter enquiries (430 in 2011, compared to 278 in 2010) with email enquiries remaining fairly constant with 171 in 2010 and 212 in 2011.

February

February 2011 saw another 44% increase in the total number of enquiries compared to February 2010, from 436 in 2010 to 632 in 2011, with the highest increase seen in telephone and letter enquiries (427 in 2011 compared with 270 in 2010). Email enquiries increased from 166 in 2010 to 205 in 2011.

March

The total number of enquiries for March 2011 was 700, a 14% increase from 614 in March 2010. The total number of phone and letter enquiries increased to 437 in 2011 from 430 in 2010, whilst the total number of email enquiries increased from 214 in 2010 to 263 in 2011.

The Out of Hours Volunteer service

The Out of Hours project provides an out of hours telephone service run by volunteers over the summer months when people are most likely to find a bat. The majority of these calls involve injured bats, and it is important that people receive prompt advice not only for the bats welfare and the conservation value of these calls, but due to the risk of being bitten when handling the bat. As PET for EBLV ideally should start within 72 hours of exposure, bat bites over weekends are of particular concern.

In 2011, the summer Out of Hours service will be managed by Zoe Tubbs. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Zoe (ztubbs@bats.org.uk).

Bat care network and bat bites

Bea Ayling is now co-coordinating the Bat Carer Network, and attended a bat carer course in Wales on 19th March, following the recruitment drive there last quarter. The bat carer list is constantly expanding, reducing the burden on other bat carers and increasing the number of bats rescued.

Bat care calls represent a large percentage of the overall enquiries and acts as a valuable educational and recruitment tool. Many bat bite cases are discovered from the routine questions asked during such calls. Due to bats being less active at this time of the year and therefore less people handling bats, few bat bites cases are dealt with over the winter months. One bat bite case was dealt with by Helpline in this quarter, compared to two in 2010.

Events

Zoe Tubbs attended the North Bat Convention on the 26th – 27th March 2011.

“As the Lot Co-ordinator for the Northwest there is clear benefit to my attending the North Bat Conference. This conference will prove not only a draw to those who are new to bats but also to established volunteers associated with local bat groups. As such it will introduce me to those who are already linked with BCT; ideally putting faces to names (on both sides) should strengthen how the Northwest team works and relates. The conference will also provide an opportunity to network and raise awareness. “

Bea attended the Bat Care Training on Saturday 19th March 2011 in Wales.

“A ‘Bat Care for Beginners’ course was run by Maggie Brown (N. Yorkshire Bat Group) and Steve Lucas at the Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve Visitor Centre, near Wrexham in North Wales. The BCT Bat Care Network has not got many bat carers listed in Wales, and this course was organised in order to increase the numbers available to respond to local bat care calls via the Helpline. The course was attended by twelve new potential bat carers.”

Amanda Adebisi attended a training course on 30th March 2011 on ‘Dealing with difficult people’.

The Natural England Contract and Casework

The current Natural England contract includes eight of the ten NE Lots (North East, Cheshire & Lancashire, West Midlands, East of England, South East, South West, Cornwall & the Isle of Scilly and Yorkshire & the Humber). Between January and 25 March this year the Helpline has organised 335 roost visits, up five from the 331 visits arranged during this period in 2010.

Helpline continue to aim to write letters within two days of receipt of the roost report for urgent cases and within five days for non-urgent cases. Helpline aim to send out letters within Natural England’s fifteen day deadline from the first contact with a householder, although sometimes this is not possible, for example, if a summer survey is needed or a roost report form is not received within this time. The Helpline organised a total of 276 roost visits in this period in 2011 (January, 95; February, 92; March, 89) a decrease from 328 roost visits for this period in 2010 (January, 157; February, 101; March, 70).

Lot Co-ordinators

Lot co-ordinators provide a point of contact for bat workers and local Natural England staff.

In this quarter, the lot co-ordinators were as follows;

Crystal Schintz – South east

Amanda Adebisi – North East, Yorkshire & Humberside

Charlotte Wevill – East of England

Bea Ayling– South west

Zoe Tubbs – Cheshire & Lancashire

Xenia Snowman – West Midlands

Staff Changes

The January to March 2011 Helpline team comprised Kit Stoner (Helpline Manager), Amanda Adebisi (Helpline Technical Advisor), Crystal Schintz (Assistant Helpline Technical Advisor); full time Helpline officers Xenia Snowman, Zoe Tubbs, Charlotte Wevill and Bea Ayling; intern, Demian Lyle, and part-time Helpline officer Jennifer Pope.

Jackie Caine left her role as a part-time helpline officer in January to start a new role at the Institute of Biology.

The summer seasonal Helpline officer vacancies have been offered to Ian Campbell and David Urry who will start on the 4th April, and Jessamy Barker who will start on the 16th April.

Line management of the helpline team continued to be shared between Kit Stoner, Helen Miller, Michelle Beckett and Amanda Adebisi.

Count Bat

The project continues to run under budget and on target. The winter projects that were formulated last quarter have been the focus of much of the teams work this quarter supported by Xenia Snowman as one day a week project support. The key projects that have been progressed this quarter are;

- Count Bat video Project (lead person Xavier)

These films to support the legacy of the project will be viewable on our website and will be aimed at bat groups, ranger services and anyone else who wants to run accessible bat events. They will each be supported by a pdf of key considerations for running such events with the different audiences so the videos themselves won't be exhaustive and will instead be as much about trying to convince people they can run bat events for wider audiences. The idea is that they will provide a human face and case studies of running such events when the project has finished.

Each video will only be about 2-3 minutes long and the ones planned are:

- Working with communities including culturally diverse groups (based around a 'bat fun day' type event)
- Running a physically accessible event (based around a bat walk/bat box workshop)
- Working with young people, including learning difficulties youth groups (based around school/youth events)
- Working with a deaf and hard of hearing group – based around a bat walk event
- Working with a visually impaired audience – based around a bat talk (including using detectors on a walk)

The team have started filming events and interviews with relevant partner groups and are aiming to produce all videos and publish them online before the end of the year.

- Bat trail or 'How to look out for bats' interactive landscape (lead people Xavier and Diana)

To encourage the general public to go out and look out for bats in their local green spaces, the Count Bat team has developed an interactive urban landscape (now published on our website www.bats.org.uk/battrail) for people to discover the urban habitats and landscape features that are important for bats. The interactive map features videos, photos and audio clips and gives information on bats, their habitats as well as advice on where and how to look out for bats. We will also add other online resources with the view of encouraging Friends Of groups and other user groups to create their own bat trail in their park.

- Overhauling the Big Bat Map to make it more user-friendly and to include events and accessible places to see bats around the country (lead people Dan, Diana and Heather McFarlane)

This has now gone out to a web design company and should be live in May. We are looking to combine the garden bat watch project idea with the launch and are investigating having bat seed packs to give to the first hundred people that submit records on the map

- Basic bat promotional resources suitable for attracting wider audiences (lead person Diana)

Two posters have so far been drafted using suggested approaches from Black Environment Network (BEN) training

Two education resource meetings were also organised and attended by the Count Bat team together with honorary education officer Shirley Thomson, Jude Hirstwood of Bedfordshire Bat Group, Senior Disability Officer Claire Wickham and BCTs Scottish and Welsh Officers Anne Youngman and Steve Lucas. The most useful bat education resources and ideas were collated at the meeting with the aim of building an education resource library, and regional education network workshops are to be held later in the year to engage and network active outreach members of bat groups and other organisations.

Count Bat cumulative delivery to date (3/4 of way into project)

	Key full project target delivery (attendees in brackets)	
	Total 4 year Target	Delivered to date
Training events	63(675)	37(524)
Education Events	108(3633)	109(11,129 + 10,024 at large events))
Surveys	90(900)	57(904) + 750 on big bat map
Events delivered in partnership with target groups	72(672)	90(3130)

Delivery of training together with further development of resources and networks to sustain the project aims will be a key focus of the remainder of the project.

With the exciting news of Diana's pregnancy an advert was placed in March for her maternity cover replacement and interviews are to be held in April.

Count Bat Project Co-ordination and in South West and West Midlands Region – Dan Merrett

Dan attended a South West HLF funding workshop in February to hear how BCT could best meet their funding aims in a future community-based project. He also designed and arranged to undertake a specific small funded piece of work for Bath & NE Somerset Council looking at the outcomes of planning-conditioned bat mitigation. The work will amount to around 15 days and will be undertaken by Dan across the summer with the Count Bat Project time made up by adding 15 days to the end of his current project contract end date. An update meeting was also attended with Wiltshire FWAG (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust who are planning a Wiltshire Batscapes project and he has been liaison with Avon Wildlife Trust who have funding for a 'Bats in Bath' project which will run this year.

In March he gave talks to two groups of infants at a school near Bath, one of which led to the discovery of a previously unknown lesser horseshoe roost through pictures taken by one of the pupils. 55 pupils attended the talks.

Bristol Green City Bats

Two training events are planned for May for the Green City bats groups and a 'Party in the Park' event was attended in March at one of the small urban parks where over 200 local people attended and Dan made bat hats and finger puppets for the children.

Count Bat Region 3: North and East – Diana Hagues

This quarter Diana has been progressing with her Count Bat projects in Ripon, North Yorkshire, Wakefield and Newcastle, as a continuation from last year's events. She has also delivered events in two other areas in her region, and is listed as follows:

- 25/1/11 – Bat box building with Wilds Lodge School in Rutland, Leicestershire

This event involved a class of 8 boys with special needs and 3 teaching staff making the Kent bat boxes that was to go in the grounds of the school to improve the habitat for bats. Diana gave a bat talk at the end of the session and brought along some props, such as dead bats and foam bats, to show the pupils the different species of bats we have in Britain. The teacher, Martin Quinlan, thanked Diana for coming to work with the schoolchildren and commented on how much they enjoyed the activity, and also how the boys were still talking about what they did afterwards. The school has now put up 4 boxes at their sites and 4 were taken to put up at the boys' homes. The teacher hopes to organise other events with Count Bat later in the Spring/Summer, including a bat walk for the whole school.

- 15/2/11 – Bat box building at HMP Hatfield, Doncaster, South Yorkshire

10 prisoners and 3 prison staff made bat boxes with the wood supplied by the Count Bat project, and Diana gave a short introductory talk about bats to this new audience. 20 Kent bat boxes in total were put together, which will be put up around the prison site where bats are present.

- 12/3/11 – Bat box building with Open Country, Nosterfield Nature Reserve, North Yorkshire

This event was held in partnership with the Harrogate-based organisation that works with people with disabilities and gets them involved in environmental projects. The group had previously attended bat walks ran by Count Bat, but this was the first bat box building workshop that they took part in. 16 people attended the workshop, including the staff and carers. There were also 2 local residents from the Ripon bat project who came out to help with the event.

- 19/3/11 – Ouseburn Green Day, Newcastle

As part of the Newcastle Count Bat project, Diana ran a bat stall at this community event to raise awareness of bats in the local area and promote the bat events that will be happening here. 30 people attended and the children got involved in making bat kites and colouring bat masks as part of the craft activities that were provided.

Green City Bats in Wakefield

Green City Bats was launched in Wakefield at the beginning of March and an email and article was sent via the council's countryside services to promote the scheme to local Friends groups and other community-based greenspace groups. So far, one group has registered to take part in the scheme and we hope more will follow in due course.

Future Plans

In June, Diana will be going on maternity leave. As such, she will be chiefly focussing her work on delivery of events and training in the targeted areas (as above) over the coming months, as well as build on existing partnerships and communications with community groups and external organisations to develop events later this year when her maternity cover will be in post. Diana will also be concentrating her efforts to support the rest of the Count Bat team in developing and producing resources that are already in the pipeline, such as the Count Bat videos, Big Bat Map re-launch and accessible leaflets.

Recruitment for her maternity cover has commenced with the Count Bat Officer for the North and East region being advertised at the end of March and interviews will take place in early April. The new recruit will have the option to be based either in the north region or in the new BCT office in Vauxhall, but will be expected to take on extensive travel.

Count Bat Region 1: London and the South East – Xavier Hamon

This quarter has seen the delivery of the last events for 2010 and good progress has been made on plans and partnerships for the spring and summer 2011.

Events

- School Assembly – Shaftesbury School, Wandsworth 17th March

Children from key stage 1 and 2 took part in creating a bat landscape, making bat masks and learn some bat poems before listening to a school bat assembly given by Xavier. 190 children attended the assembly and were really eager to learn about bats and the ways they could help them. The London Bat group and Count Bat will lead a follow up bat walk in Battersea Park on the 1st April for the school that will include parents and teachers.

Green City Bats scheme in London

This winter, another 20 groups have registered to the Green City Bats (GCB) scheme, and we are now happy to count 80 GCB groups in the capital. In order to structure the network of GCB groups a social and networking event has been organised and will gather more than 50 people on the 2nd April in London for a networking lunch meeting. The aim of this day is to create a stronger network of GCB groups in London, encourage groups to run events with their local community and sign up to take part in NBMP surveys. To train these volunteer-led groups, the GCB scheme is setting up a series of four training workshops (How to lead bat walks, NBMP workshops) in April/May across different part of London (Croydon, Haringey, Greenwich).

The next E-bulletin will be published after the GCB lunch and will promote the beginning of the bat season, the International Year of the Bat and the different NBMP survey periods. We are hoping to see more than 30% of the registered groups running at least one bat walk in 2011 and at least 20% to undertake NBMP surveys.

Future Plans

With the City Bridge Trust (London) funding coming to an end in January 2011 Xavier plans to deliver more Count Bat events outside London, such as in Kent and Sussex with the help of local bat groups.

Marketing

Membership

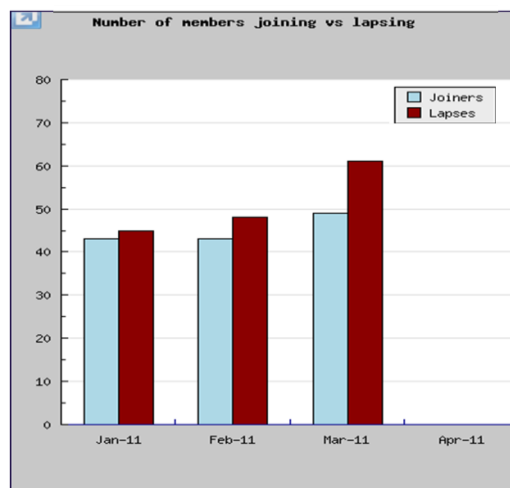
Membership has continued to decrease this quarter, dropping further by just under 1%. We have been attempting to rectify this trend by calling up passed lapsed members to encourage them to rejoin BCT . The Helplines' membership recruitment process has been redesigned and all helpline officers have been retrained using different approaches to recruit members depending on the call type. In 2Q of the year we are planning to offer a free roost owners membership to people who call the Helpline with a bat roost and require a visit, hopefully this will enable the Helpline to become more confident talking about membership to callers and help boost membership numbers.

- Life Members have stayed the same at 24
- Corporate Members have increased from 16 to 17

Membership Breakdown

Membership Type	Count of Members end Q4 2010	Count of Members end Q1 2011
1) Benefactor	80	79
2) Concession	478	466
3) Corporate	16	17
4) Family	1832	1876
5) Honorary	8	8
6) Individual	1752	1728
7) Life	24	24
8) Supporter	130	128
9) Young BW	298	276
10) Teacher/leader	74	61
Total	4692	4663

Number of members joining vs. lapsing



Communications and Marketing

Year of the bat/ 20th anniversary

BCT's themed months for Year of the Bat have been working well with integrated activities across twitter, facebook, blog and website and events driving traffic to BCT site, January was communications with raising awareness of the year, February saw *love bats and biodiversity* with Valentine's Day seeing over 2000 E-cards being sent and BCT staff tweeting why they loved bats and popular polls running on facebook, this led to the most hits in one day on the site this year. March was bats and buildings month with blogs, ecobuild exhibitions and social media coming together to focus attention on bats and buildings.

E-communications

Facebook 'fans' and twitter 'followers' continue to increase this quarter hitting reaching over 8,800 social media followers'. As of 31 March: 6,387 Facebook fans; 2,506 twitter followers.

Website

Overall was an increase in number visitors on this quarter last year (on average 15 % increase).

Bat News

After the last Trustees meeting when it was agreed we could sell advertising space in Bat News, we have now started to sell this opportunity. The timing was tight for the Spring issue and we have a couple of people interested in the Summer edition.

Events

BCT again attended Ecobuild primarily promoting bat friendly building practices, and BCT training courses and corporate membership, see Bats and Built Environment for details.

Future events: The Regent's Park Bat walk will be on Thursday 12 May 2011. This is an annual event aimed at funders, life members and major donors and the media/press. Wholefoods will be providing some food and drink, Jenny Clarke will be there with her 'education team', there will be 2 short talks and then a bat walk around the park.

Media

Lisa Hundt, Head of Biodiversity BBC Radio York, Bats featured on BBC Look East with the Cambridgeshire Bat group. Count Bat appeared in Lambeth News. Bats and BCT was in February BBC Gardener's World magazine.

Ebulletin

January's HTML Bat eBulletin was sent to 7180 subscribers (the last November issue was sent to 7149 subscribers). This issue included information about the 2011 National Bat Conference and Year of the Bat. There were also links to BCT vacancies and the Bechstein's Project report. This has been taken over by the Comms team rather than the Bat Groups Officer and is likely will be sent out in its current format on a monthly bulletin on the first Tuesday of the month.

Fundraising

- **Appeals to members and donors**

Winter appeal: 2010 Christmas appeal continued to bring donation into 2011, already BCT most successful appeal

Legacy appeal:

We have now contact all our lapsed members over the past 3 years and all our loyal members who have been members for at least 5 years. We have received 2 emails confirming that people have included BCT in their Wills. We also regularly put notices on Twitter and Facebook to remind people of this opportunity for continued support.

Bat Group Appeal

Partner and Network Bat Groups have all received an appeal this quarter. Those in England asking to support the Investigations Project, those in Wales the Wales Bat Project and those in Scotland the Scottish Bat Project. As anticipated some bat groups are able to consider the appeal, while others haven't the funds but generally all three appeals have been well received irrespective of the groups finances with 2 groups in England, 1 group in Wales and 1 group in Scotland already having given.

- **Fundraising initiatives in development**

Adopt-a-bat: Development is continuing on this project, the WebPages will be constructed during the 2Q as well as the continued development and design of the adoption pack. The bat toys have now been ordered and will be arriving at the beginning of the 3Q. We intend to do a soft launch initially to enable and administration flaws to be rectified before launching a heavy promotion focussing on the 4Q for Christmas.

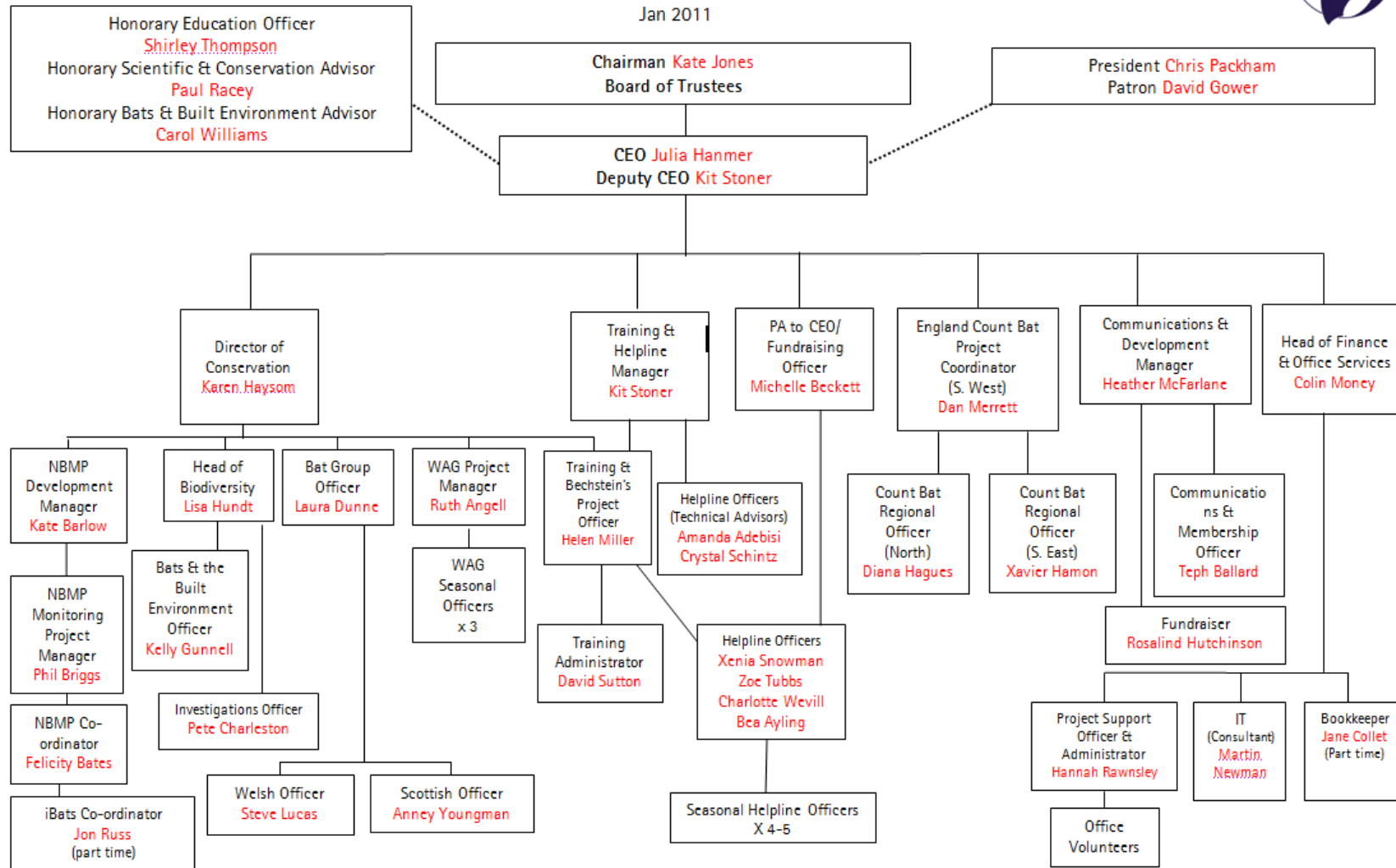
Monthly giving and monthly membership: This is being developed during 2Q and will be implemented at the beginning of 3Q allowing members and donors to make regular donations on a monthly basis via an online, telephone or hard copy sign up process and will be implemented alongside adopt-a-bat so that members, bat adopters and donors all have the option to pay monthly by Direct Debit if they wish.

Appendices



Organisational Structure

Jan 2011



Staff List

Chief Executive	Julia Hanmer	JH
Deputy Chief Executive/Training & Helpline Manager	Kit Stoner	KS
Director of Conservation	Karen Haysom	KH
Biodiversity Officer	Lisa Hundt	LH
Senior Research Scientist/ Project Manager	Ruth Angell	RA
Bats & the Built Environment Officer	Kelly Gunnell	KG
Investigations Officer	Peter Charleston	PC
Bat Group Officer	Laura Dunne	LD
Scottish Bat Officer	Anne Youngman	AY
Wales Bat Officer	Steve Lucas	SL
NBMP Development Manager	Kate Barlow	KB
Monitoring Projects Manager	Philip Briggs	PB
NBMP Survey Co-ordinator	Felicity Bates	FB
iBats Project Co-ordinator Co-ordinator	Jon Russ	JR
Bechstein's Bat Project Officer & Training Development Officer	Helen Miller	HM
Training & Events Administrator	Dave Sutton	DS
Count Bat Co-ordinator	Dan Merrett	DM
Count Bat Regional Officer	Diana Hagues	DH
Count Bat Regional Officer	Xavier Hamon	XH
Communications & Development Manager	Heather McFarlane	HMcf
Fundraiser & Membership Officer	Stephen Ballard	SB
Fundraiser (Trusts & Grants)	Rosalind Hutchinson	RH
Helpline Officer/ Technical Advisor	Amanda Adebisi	AA
Helpline Officer/ Technical Assistant	Crystal Schintz	CS
Helpline Officer	Xenia Snowman	XS
Helpline Officer	Zoe Tubbs	ZT
Helpline Officer	Charlotte Wevill	CW
Helpline Officer	Bea Ayling	BA
PA to CEO/Fundraising Officer	Michelle Beckett	MB
Head of Finance and Office Services	Colin Money	CM
Administrative Assistant	Hannah Rawnsley	HR
Book Keeper	Jane Collett	JC
Honorary Posts		
Hon. Education Officer	Shirley Thompson	ST
Hon. Conservation and Scientific Adviser	Paul Racey	PAR
Hon. Bats and Built Environment Advisor	Dr Carol Williams	CW

Glossary

Appendix A: Glossary of definitions of acronyms used in the text

Acronym	Description
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BARS	Biodiversity Action Recording System
BCT	The Bat Conservation Trust
BRE	Bat Related Enquiries
BRIG	Biological Recording and Information Group
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
CSL	Central Science Laboratories
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EAF	Environmental Action Fund (Defra)
EBLV	European Bat Lyssavirus
GPG	Good Practice Guidelines
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
HCT	Herpetological Conservation Trust
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
HPA	Health Protection Agency
KBG	Kent Bat Group
LWT	London Wildlife Trust
MTUK	Mammals Trust UK
NBMP	National Bat Monitoring Programme
NE	Natural England
NDGB	Non Departmental Government Body
NSP	Noctule, Serotine & Pipistrelle
NTS	National Trust (Scotland)
PAWS	Partnership Against Wildlife Crime
PPG9	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS9	Planning Policy Statement
RDS	Rural Development Service
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAP	Species Action Plan
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SSPCA	Scottish Society for the Protection of Animals
VLA	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
WCO	Wildlife Crime Officer
WOM	Word of Mouth
WWF	World Wildlife Fund